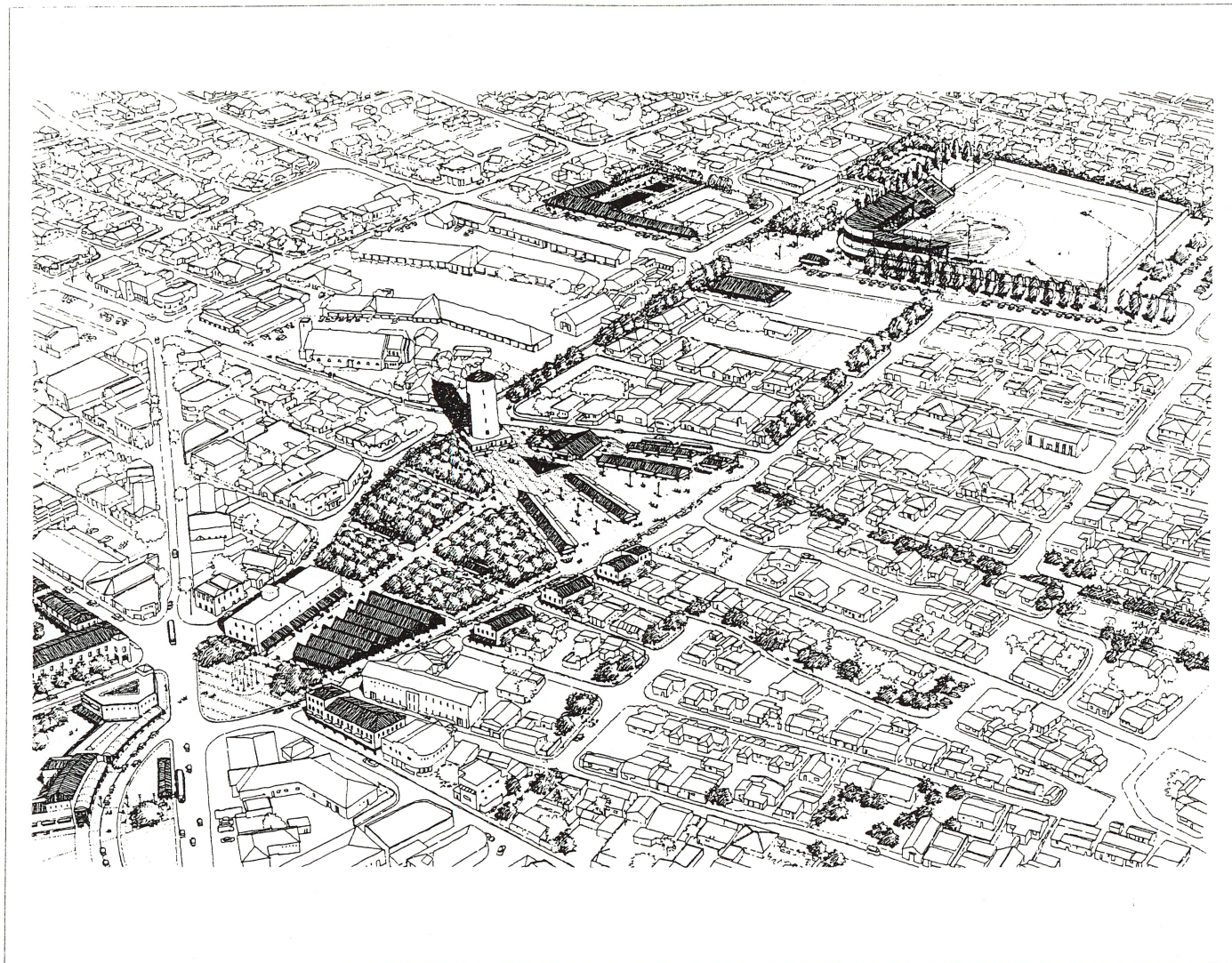


SAN NICOLAS MASTER PLAN - EXHIBITION - ARUBA



San Nicolas Civic Spine and Village

Perspective Sketch

Government of Aruba

Sasaki Associates, Inc.

August 1995

Arubiana: 1306

SAN NICOLAS MASTER PLAN - EXHIBITION - ARUBA

Figure No.	Drawing Title
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- 2	Photo Board-Process
- 3	Photo Board-Nature
- 4	Photo Board-Nature
- 5	Photo Board-Historical/Cultural
6	Aruba Visitor Attractions
7	Island Circuit Plan
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ARUBIANA / CARIBIANA

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For reference.

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FROM THIS ROOM.

Figure 6

Visitor Attractions

The goal of the study is to enhance the quality of life and economic well being of the residents of the San Nicolas area. Tourism is the engine of the island economy. San Nicolas can be strategically positioned to take advantage of tourist expenditures by improving connections to other parts of the island, particularly to the hotel districts at Palm Beach and Eagle Beach. The San Nicolas area along with other historic, cultural, and natural attractions on the island are potential visitor destinations which will broaden the appeal of Aruba beyond the sun and beach. A diversity of destinations on the island will encourage longer stays and tend to attract visitors seeking the natural environmental experiences of the varied and dramatic Arikok National Park, a variety of coastal zones, and coral reefs. The historic and cultural destinations including historic San Nicolas appeal to visitors seeking a more authentic Caribbean experience of regional cuisine, art, music, and architecture. Increasingly sophisticated tourists, particularly from Europe, will seek to blend the appeal of Aruba's predictably good weather, excellent white sandy beaches, with informative experiences in the natural environment as well as a taste of real Caribbean culture.

Figure 7

Island Circuit

The Island Circuit is a well marked series of roads circumnavigating Aruba, connecting the natural, historic, and cultural sites. San Nicolas and adjacent areas are an integral part of the circuit in order to bring visitors on day trips to the local community and businesses. The San Nicolas area with a local population of about 25,000 people can accommodate some visitors without disturbing the Caribbean milieu of a diverse and vital community. The Island Circuit consists of existing roads with some upgraded segments and a limited amount of new connecting roads. An integrated and comprehensive new way finding system beginning at the airport and extending to pedestrian areas with signs and graphics will orient visitors and residents to island destinations. In addition to the Island Circuit, an island wide system of bicycle paths is planned to link towns and communities as well as visitor destinations. The bicycle paths comprising over 40 kilometers are separate from vehicular ways either paralleling the road or in scenic areas following the natural topography or coastline. The network of paths which could be phased in over time will allow the cyclist to make excursions in loops requiring 2 hours to day long treks around the island. The range of cycling experiences will vary from beautiful coastal trails along bays to the challenging topography of the National Park. Bicycle rentals are available at key locations along the system, such as Oranjestad, San Nicolas, Arikok National Park, and at major transit nodes.

Figure 8

Land Use and Circulation

The existing pattern of settlement in the southeast half of the island from Pos Chiquito to Seroe Colorado shows a distinct pattern of urbanization. San Nicolas and adjacent communities lie in generally level coastal areas on the south coast with decreasing density as the topography ascends toward Arikok National Park to the north. San Nicolas, the largest urban center with a downtown focused on the entry to the refinery, remains the center of the Caribbean community surrounded by moderately dense urban neighborhoods such as Brazil, Lago Heights, and Cura Cubai. Extending along the coast, Pos Chiquito and historic Savaneta are villages linked to San Nicolas while having their own individual identity. These neighborhoods and villages are subcenters of the greater San Nicolas area which are each focused on proposed transit nodes. The transit nodes near the center of each neighborhood or village provide bus and taxi connections to an upgraded island wide system. By assuming a 600 meter walking distance from the transit node, an area is defined which is a transit served neighborhood within a 10 to 15 minute walking distance of the bus stop.

Identified on the Land Use Plan are over twenty development parcels ranging in size from 2 to over 60 hectares for future residential use. These parcels are in or adjacent to Pos Chiquito, Savaneta, San Nicolas, and Seroe Colorado. In addition, there are other small scale infill opportunities not mapped. Housing sites in areas defined as transit served neighborhoods are planned to accommodate higher densities, up to 25 units per hectare, than other parcels. Parcels not served by transit range from very low density (one unit or less per hectare) adjacent to the National Park to up to 10 units per hectare near existing urbanized areas.

A critical land use issue in the southeastern part of the island is the edge between Arikok National Park and residential development. The plan shows an enlargement of the National Park boundary southward to incorporate environmentally sensitive natural areas and so that the park boundary will relate directly to the natural form of the land. This revision is based on an analysis of topography, habitat zones, and vegetation.

The eastern coastal zone of the island including the escarpment and coastal plain from the National Park to Colorado Point is a sensitive environmental as well as recreational area. Recommended is a coastal preservation zone extending 200 meters inland from the escarpment. No building development is allowed in this zone, as well as along the coastal plain, however recreational uses such as golf courses are permitted and certain water dependent uses may be allowed if designed to blend with the landscape setting.



Figure 9
Roadway Network
Circulation Plan

The existing L.G. Smith Boulevard extension from Oranjestad to San Nicolas with only two lanes requires upgrading as well as an alternative route to link Aruba's two principal towns. Proposed is a roadway fit into the landscape and carefully sited to avoid environmentally significant areas, settled areas, and generally occurring on government owned land to provide an alternative or bypass to L.G. Smith Boulevard. Existing L.G. Smith Boulevard can be upgraded in the segment from the airport over Spanish Lagoon and past Pos Chiquito. Two significant arroyos forming an isla occur just south of Pos Chiquito. This area should not be disturbed. The bypass can connect to an upgraded four lane L.G. Smith Boulevard beyond the isla. The bypass can be fit into the gently sloping lands avoiding all but a few houses and eventually connect to Bernhard Straat which currently functions as a bypass to downtown San Nicolas. The design of this roadway in the landscape is critical to its success. It should be carefully related to the topography with two lanes in each direction. The section should be split so that each pair of lanes is sited with respect to the shape of the land and in response to other unique site features. The split section disturbs less land in grading and can retain more of the existing vegetation. Intersections should be limited to approximately one per kilometer. These characteristics will make the bypass an attractive parkway fit into the landscape rather than a highway. The parkway accomplishes several improvements for this end of the island: improved access to and from San Nicolas, enhanced safety, improved access to growth areas near the parkway, an attractive new entry to San Nicolas, and a potential new efficient commuter bus route to Oranjestad.

Figure 10

Infrastructure\Wastewater Treatment

The planning of infrastructure systems will play an important role in the success of long range land use planning goals for the San Nicolas/Savaneta Region. Accordingly, waste water collection and treatment systems are a major component of the San Nicolas/Savaneta master planning process.

Island wide, only Oranjestad and the extreme west end of Aruba including the high rise hotel district are presently serviced by a formal waste water treatment facility.

In sharp contrast to the treatment facility serving the Oranjestad/Noord/Tanski Leendent regions, the regions of San Nicolas and Savaneta are not served by any formal waste water treatment system. The majority of homes and businesses rely upon septic systems or leeching pits and in the worst case direct discharge into the sea along coastal areas. Perched water tables and poor if not totally impervious soil conditions have added to the waste water disposal problems of this area and are certain to increase in light of continued growth in population of the region, with the construction of new homes in addition to cohabitation of extended families in existing homes.

In response to these concerns, the Aruba Dienst Openbare Werken has formulated plans for the construction of a region-wide wastewater collection network and state-of-the-art facilities for waste water treatment and water recycling.

Water reclamation is viewed as a key component of the plans for wastewater treatment due to the great potential benefits for irrigation of public landscapes, parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities, of the San Nicolas/Savaneta region.

Figure 11

San Nicolas Framework Plan

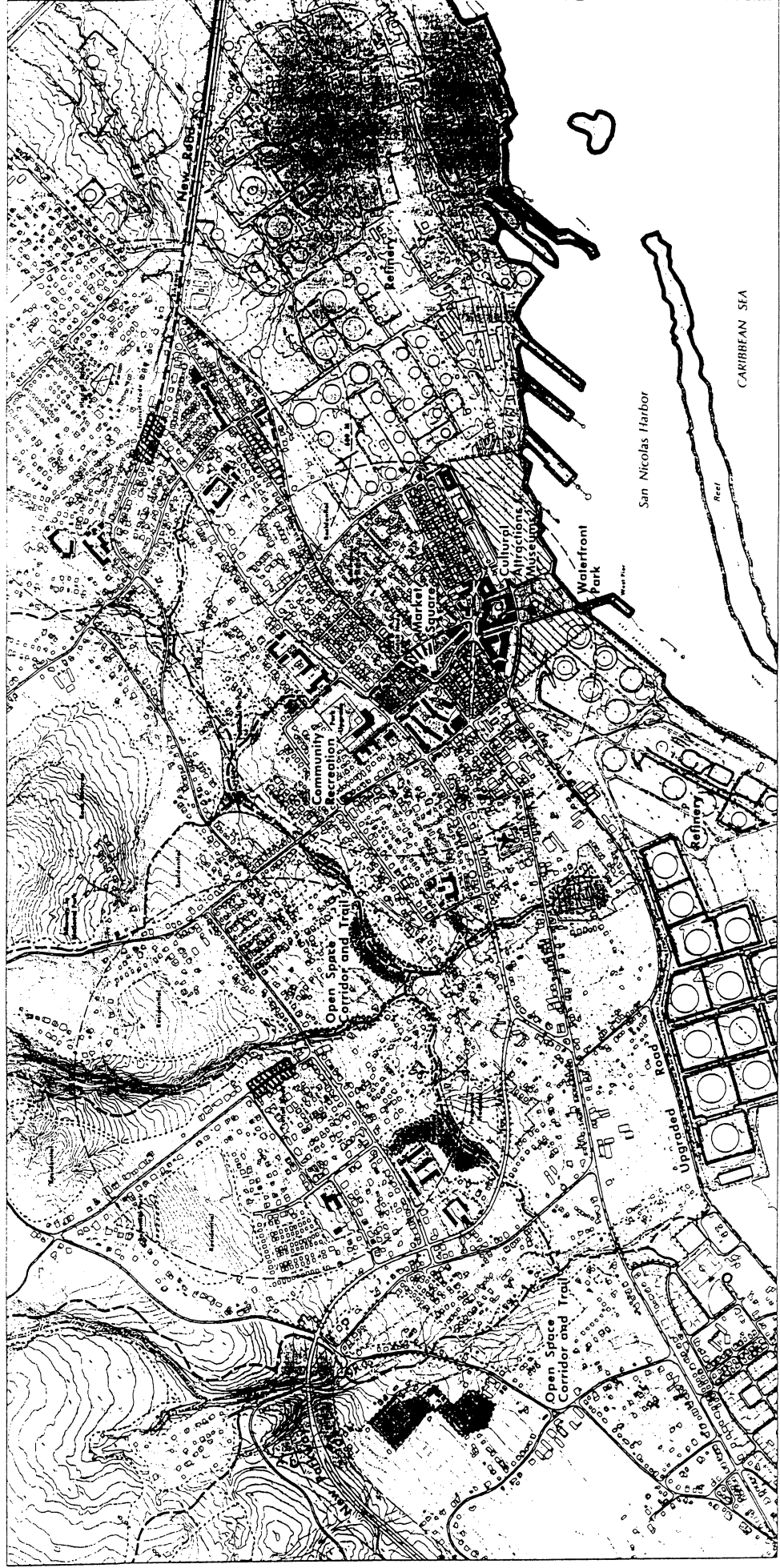
Framework plans identify the basic structure of the community showing open space, circulation, and land use. In addition certain strategic initiatives are located on the framework plans. These may include new residential infill projects, park upgrades, or other early action projects.

Within the urbanized area along the coast between villages are some significant undeveloped areas which include abandoned aloe fields, environmentally sensitive arroyos or drainage ways, and other vacant lands. These lands are planned as an open space network and trail system that creates open space around villages and neighborhoods. By linking these patches of undeveloped area and drainage ways into a corridor system the potential environmental benefits are maximized compared to isolated preservation zones. The trail system extending through the open spaces makes connections to schools, other community facilities, San Nicolas center, and to the National Park to the north.

The new parkway helps to reduce the need for through traffic to use L.G. Smith Boulevard. In addition, the existing sections of L.G. Smith Boulevard extension into San Nicolas require improvements for reasons of improving safety. The number of intersections should be reduced where possible and access to driveways and parking limited. Where possible access to individual properties should occur from secondary roads at the rear of the lots rather than off of L.G. Smith extension. Other roadways making connections to the intersections on the new proposed parkway may also require upgrading. A new southern street between Cura Cubai and the water and along the edge of the refinery is recommended to provide a third means of access to San Nicolas. This street will help reduce the traffic impacts on residential uses on L.G. Smith Boulevard and will connect to planned new parking areas in the Civic Spine.

The land use component of the framework plans include a number of sites for potential residential infill development. Recommended density in these parcels range from very low (one unit or less per hectare) in sites north of the parkway to moderate (4 to 6 units per hectare) in sites at the edge of settled areas to urban (over 8 units per hectare and up to 25 units per hectare). In addition to these parcels identified on the framework plans for residential development it is assumed that small incremental infill housing can also occur within existing urbanized areas. It is assumed that these existing settled areas can accommodate on average an additional 1.25 units per hectare.

Within the framework plans are a number of strategic initiatives or targeted projects for early action implementation. These series of projects are aimed at making improvements which will touch the lives of everyone. The San Nicolas civic spine and village improvements will make a new highly visible center of community at this end of the island. Other initiatives are aimed at enhancing village or neighborhood centers, such as Savaneta, Cura Cubai, Seroe Colorado, or Juana Morta. The plan for the Arikok National Park will help preserve and make this resource more usable for residents as well as visitors.



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San Nicolas Framework Plan

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Figures 12, 13, 14, 15

San Nicolas Civic Spine and Village

San Nicolas Civic Spine

San Nicolas Perspective Sketch

The Civic Spine is an idea to improve the heart of San Nicolas with a series of projects that will transform the center of the community. There are four linked focal points in the Civic Spine: a community recreational focus at the upgraded Sports Park on Hendrik Straat, a Market Square adjacent to the water tower on Bernhard Straat, a Civic Square with museums and other cultural facilities, and a new Waterfront Park linking the downtown to the harbor. The Civic Spine thus makes a link from the waterfront to the Sports Park and beyond with a multi-use trail connecting north to the National Park. It also heals the gap and connects the existing retail districts; the Promenade to the west and Zeppenfeldt Straat to the east.

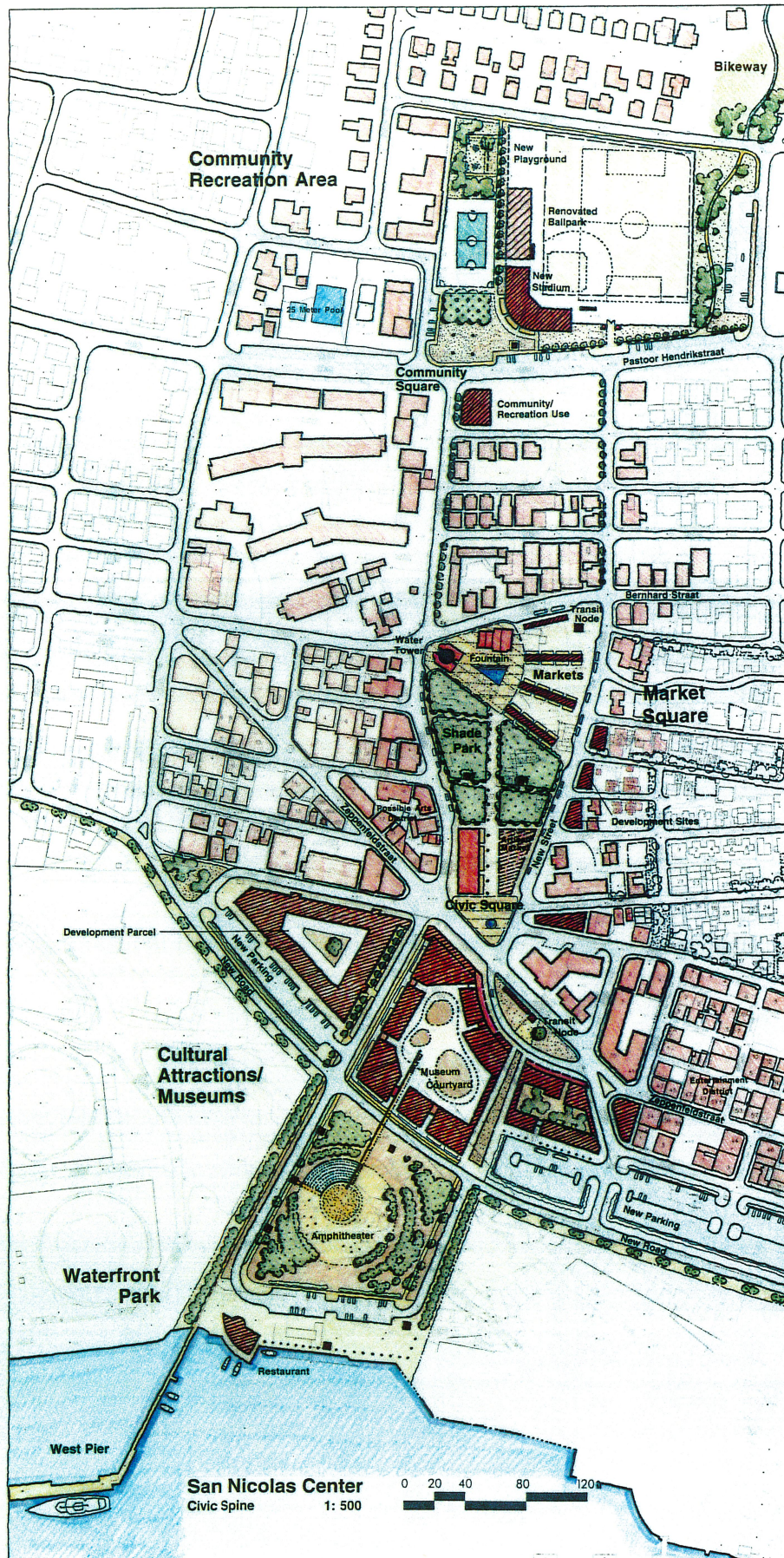
Sports Park

The Civic Spine concept takes advantage of the existing resource of the old Lago Refinery Sports Park which is in need of repair and desperately needed by the community for recreational use. Proposed are new seating areas, shade structures, entries, concessions, restrooms, and other support facilities. The existing wall on Hendrik Straat which is a formidable barrier should be removed and a new fence, visual screen, entry square and planting installed to create a shaded park like setting for the ballpark. Streets surrounding the ballpark including Hendrik Straat should be modified to accommodate additional parking in small lots or directly off the street where possible. Adjacent to the ballpark, improvements to the YMCA will reinforce this location as a community recreation area by adding a 25 meter neighborhood swimming pool and children's pool. The existing basketball court, upgraded, remains in the Sports Park. In addition, a playground is proposed for the northwest corner of the site adjacent to the neighborhood.

Market Square

Market Square, adjacent to the landmark water tower, is designed to become the symbolic center of the community. Modeled after other successful city center markets in the Caribbean, Holland, and other parts of Europe, it is intended to be a focus and meeting place for San Nicolas the way such markets have flourished for thousands of years in cities. They are planned to sell fruit, vegetable, produce, and other food and beverage needs. The existing and historic rum shop on Bernhard Straat remains as an integral part of the Square. The markets are new open air shade structures, with a design character influenced by the Caribbean architecture of San Nicolas. Market days could occur several times a week as well as a major market extending southward all the way to the Civic Square could be held on Saturdays. These food markets are not intended to replace existing food stores, but are planned to capture retail sales which are leaking out of the community to other locations. These food dominated markets will also benefit other

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downtown businesses on market days and attract some visitors and residents from other parts of the island as the market becomes a lively attraction. Adjacent to the markets on Bernhard Straat is planned a major new transit node with express bus connections to Oranjestad, the hotel district, and other parts of the island. It will then be possible to conveniently stop at the market when commuting to or from work.

Shade Park and Artisan Market

The proposed new Shade Park links Market Square to the Civic Plaza and future Museums and other cultural attractions. The Shade Park, also based on successful precedents in Latin American, European, and American cities, is designed to provide cool shaded relief at the heart of downtown San Nicolas. It is a place to meet, to relax, to play board games, to people watch; and it is a place with dozens of movable chairs and tables where several small open air cafes serve cool beverages well into the evening. At the southern end of the Shade Park is another open air structure, an Artisan Market where local and Caribbean hand made products are sold. It is intended to be one of a series of attractions to bring visitors from Oranjestad and the hotel district to San Nicolas.

Civic Square and Museums

The Civic Square is a setting for new museums and cultural buildings that are designed as a destination to attract visitors. It is also planned to strategically connect the two shopping districts which are currently separated by vacant parcels and a rather grim wall of the refinery. The Promenade and Zeppenfeldt Straat will both benefit by attracting visitors to the cultural facilities including a possible Museum of the Caribbean and Museum of the Carnivale. These two museum sites are created out of lands currently behind the refinery wall. Negotiations with the leaseholders are required.

Downtown San Nicolas

The Civic Spine concept aims to make a vital new center of community for all Arubans, especially local residents of San Nicolas. With so many Arubans descendent from the San Nicolas area, a revitalized downtown is important for the entire island, for historic as well as economic reasons. The Civic Spine is a targeted series of investments that is catalyst for other private sector improvements in San Nicolas. The potential vision for the future downtown is a well connected, walkable series of districts served by an upgraded bus transit system. Private sector initiatives with incentives and guidance from the public sector could revitalize the following downtown districts:

The Promenade

- The Promenade is a possible arts district of galleries, artist's loft apartments with working studios (offering tours to visitors), sidewalk cafes, Caribbean restaurants with courtyard dining and small arts related specialty shops selling artist designed jewelry, furniture, and apparel.

Zeppenfeldt Straat

-Zeppenfeldt Straat is currently a shopping district by day, a red light district at night. The area of prostitution should be limited to Grensweg, the street adjacent to the refinery wall. The shopping in this district should continue to serve the local population and aim to capture sales that are currently leaking out of San Nicolas to Oranjestad north. With prostitution limited to Grensweg, this area could also be a Caribbean entertainment district with regional music, foods representing the diverse heritage of San Nicolas, and family oriented entertainment and restaurants. These attractions, primarily for Arubans, will also appeal to increasingly sophisticated visitors seeking a more authentic Caribbean experience.

Historic Village

-The Village is a dense, historic residential quarter adjacent to the future Civic Spine and Zeppenfeldtstraat. Public improvements are planned to upgrade streets, transit, sidewalks, and planting. A small neighborhood park with basketball courts and children's playground is planned to provide much needed open space and recreational facilities. Some of the existing houses in the Village and in the adjacent areas of Zeppenfeldtstraat require upgrading. Incentives or assistance from the public sector should be used to help in these improvements to bring these buildings up to contemporary standards while retaining the historic character of the buildings. The intent is to preserve the positive qualities of this walkable urban neighborhood which was the first home of many Arubans, while upgrading the quality of life of residents of the Village.

San Nicolas Waterfront

-A future waterfront district is envisioned for the area that is an extension of the Civic Spine to the Harbor. Focused on a new Waterfront Park, this district could grow over time as refinery lands are made available for reuse. The first stages in the reuse of these lands could be as open space with innovative natural and other experimental restoration technologies employed. The future reuse of the waterfront refinery lands should allow for continuous public open space along the water for the first 100 meters. This continuous park space allows for extensive natural areas for coastal environmental restoration as well opportunities for recreational uses.

Figures 16, 17, 18

Savaneta Framework Plan

Savaneta Village Spine

Savaneta is historically significant as the site of the first settlement on the island and is an area with some of the best agricultural lands in Aruba. These agricultural lands, former aloe fields north of L.G. Smith Boulevard extension, should be preserved for several reasons. Preserving open space around Savaneta and other villages defines and maintains the village identity as increasing urbanization threatens to join these areas into one undifferentiated extended city. The agricultural fields are also a fundamental part of the history and visual character of Savaneta representing an era when aloe production was the engine of the island economy.

The village scale of Savaneta and its position on Commanders Bay are other assets to be preserved and enhanced in the Framework Plan. The center of Savaneta is planned to include a new community recreation center consisting of a 50 meter swimming pool, soccer field, and gymnasium. The entry to the recreational center is positioned at the center of Savaneta's existing core of institutions. Extending eastward from the recreational center are schools, church, cemetery, and other public institutions forming the Savaneta Village Spine. To the east the spine is terminated in a small residential square that is the focus of a new neighborhood residential infill project. The Village Spine and institutions are the center of Savaneta within the 600 meter(10 to 15 minute) walking radius of the transit node on L.G. Smith extension.

Waterfront lands at the east end of Savaneta between the flow line corridor and Commanders Bay are planned as a new waterfront park. Vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access to the park and the existing fishing boats on the site will remain at the pipeline overpass. Replanting in the park should be with native plants to restore the natural coastal vegetation. The existing baseball field and soccer field adjacent to the Dutch Marine's Compound is linked to the Waterfront Park and trail system. Minor improvements to this park are designed to reorganize roads, parking, and connect the island wide bicycle trail through the park. Bicycle trails will extend through Savaneta and into the Waterfront Park and on toward San Nicolas by diverting around the Dutch Marines' compound. This multi-use trail system also extends northward to connect to Arikok National Park.



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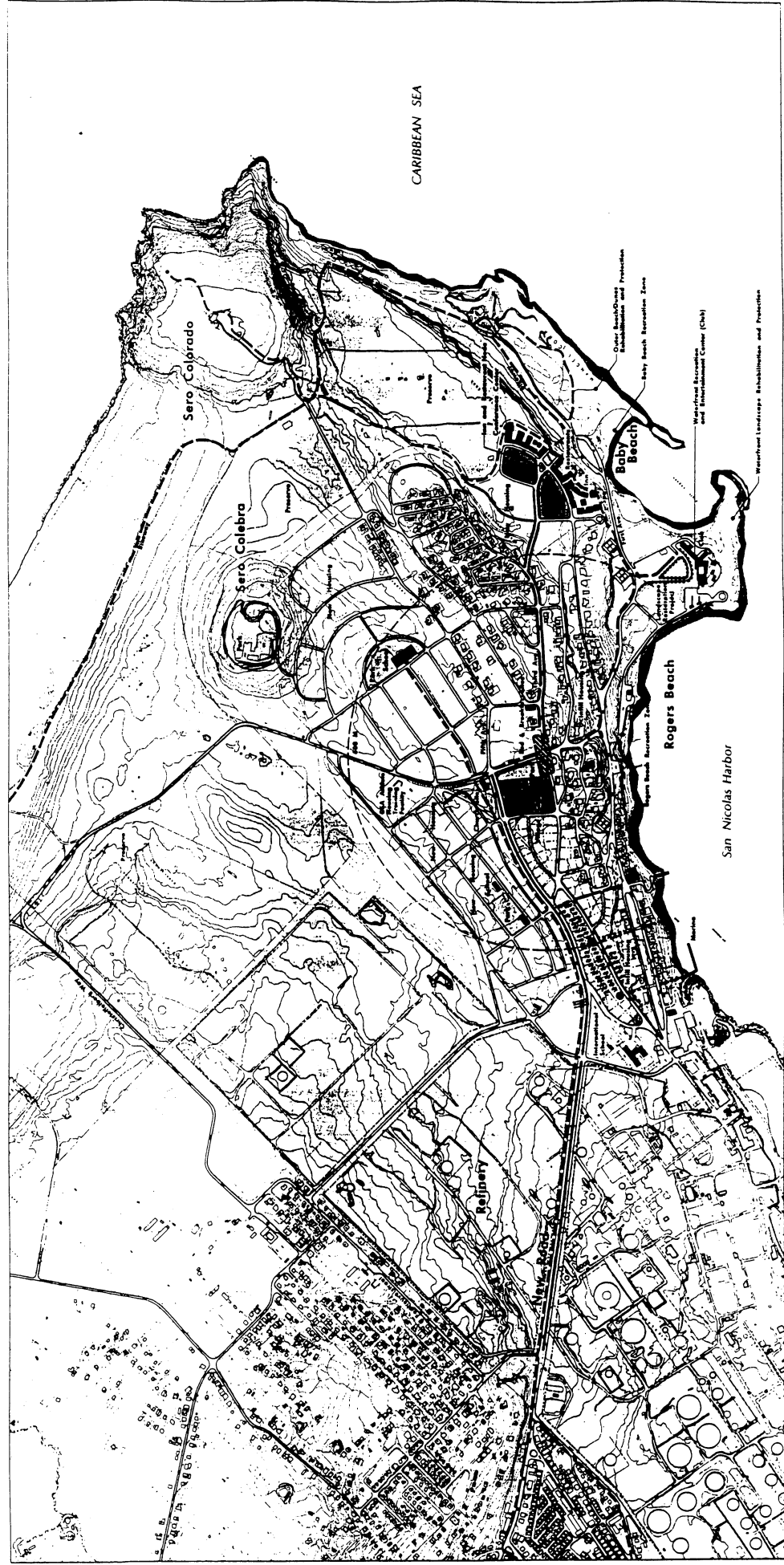
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Figure 19

Seroe Colorado Framework Plan

Seroe Colorado is an extraordinary area, historically, and because of its geographic position at the southern end of the island. The coastal lands, including the 40 meter rock outcrop known as Sero Colorado, are environmentally sensitive as habitat of native cacti, iguana, and other species. The coastal zone is recommended for preservation as part of a consistent setback including the escarpment on the island's eastern coast. Rogers Beach, Baby Beach, and the coastal area connecting these beaches to Sero Colorado point are also environmentally sensitive. These are the most convenient beaches for the San Nicolas community and intensively used on certain occasions. The intensive use, especially by vehicles, threatens the fragile ecosystem of the coastal plain. In recent years the beach vegetation has declined due to encroachment by vehicles. Recommended are clear definition of vehicular travelways and parking areas to protect these sensitive areas. Roads and parking are planned to accommodate occasional significant crowds that occur during Carnivale week. The edges of the vehicular zones require containment with barriers to prevent vehicles from going offroad into the landscape. A bollard type system of native stone is recommended to define the vehicular zone. With the beaches protected, replanting is planned to restore the coastal vegetation in a natural pattern with native plants. In certain areas along the roads and parking, palm tree planting should be used to extend the existing pattern in these special areas, otherwise native plants not requiring irrigation should be used. The old Esso Club at Rogers Beach is a special building of some historical significance to many existing and former residents of San Nicolas. Access to the club was an important part of life in San Nicolas for families of refinery workers. Recommended are improvements to the club for use as a beachfront community center. Over time some of the club's functions that are not water dependent could be replaced in new or renovated buildings more conveniently located in downtown San Nicolas. This would retain a presence on the water for the community but allow a reduction of the overall building size in this beautiful and highly visible area.

The plan for the future Seroe Colorado residential community is based on the land area that was historically developed when the expatriate colony included over 700 houses and community facilities on this site. A community framework plan is recommended that retains existing houses and streets and extends the residential street pattern to include the previously settled areas. The development, management, and maintenance of the future of Seroe Colorado should be organized to maintain a consistently high quality community. The residential density in this new area of development is at a slightly higher density than the existing settled area. The plan includes two school sites, church sites, parks, and pedestrian paths and bikeways that connect to the island bicycle trails. The old hospital site at Sero Colebra as well as Seroe Colorado Point are planned for parks with public access for all to enjoy the dramatic views. At the center of the community is a village retail center with shops, church, and other



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Seroe Colorado Framework Plan

August 1995



community facilities. The village center has a transit node and is within walking distance (600 meters) of residential areas.

At the south end of the Seroe Colorado residential area overlooking Baby Beach is planned a small visitor destination area that is integrated into the design of the community. Included in this visitor village are a 300 person meeting and conference center with a small inn of 75 to 100 rooms, a European spa and inn of 50 to 75 rooms, and at the center a cluster of core amenities including recreational facilities and three to four restaurants with outdoor terraces. In the village there may also be bed and breakfast facilities, which are ideally sized at ten to twelve rooms. Bed and breakfast facilities may also occur in other sites in Seroe Colorado such as the village retail center. The small size of these planned visitor accommodations and facilities are intended to allow the buildings to be integrated into the fabric of the community, both architecturally as well as socially. It is a form of tourism that will appeal to a traveler seeking a more authentic Caribbean experience in the environs of San Nicolas and avoiding the isolated enclaves of beachfront American style hotels. It will help diversify the island's tourist market, attract some additional business conference travel to Aruba, and encourage longer stays in more residential type accommodations.

Figure 20

Juana Morta Neighborhood

The Juana Morta neighborhood study is a prototype for residential infill sites in existing settled areas. Each residential infill site will have certain distinct features which should be incorporated in a positive way into a site specific design. This site is on high ground with views over San Nicolas and Seroe Colorado to the sea. It also has elements of history with the ruins of several World War II era gun emplacements that command views over the refinery. An existing neighborhood soccer field at the top of the hill needs upgrading. The concept is to create a neighborhood focus at an improved park with a reoriented soccer field, new playground, new planting for shade zones, and better definition of car parking and travel zones. The parking for recreational use is shared with visitors stopping to see the gun emplacements. This historic site requires clean up, preservation of existing cacti fields, some new planting, visitor paths delineated, and interpretive elements. The park and historic site form a focus at the center of the neighborhood with a series of new residential streets curving with the topography along the contours of the hill. New residential streets should be sized as narrow as possible to discourage through traffic, to save land and paving, and to form residentially scaled streets. Houses on these streets are on lots slightly smaller than the existing pattern in the neighborhood. A trail system connects from residential streets to the park at the center of the neighborhood.

Figure 21

Arikok National Park

The Arikok National Park is a particularly valuable natural resource for the Island of Aruba. Its scenic beauty, unspoiled natural habitat, and diverse terrain is an ideal setting for creating a unique program of recreation and educational activities to serve residents and visitors. Arikok National Park is also an resource essential for the preservation and study of Aruba's fragile ecosystem.

The plan for the Arikok National Park is centered on strategic site and facility improvements which are designed to enhance activities related to visitor interpretation, education and recreation; upgrade and expand the existing network of trails for pedestrians and bicycles; improve existing roadways and signage; and establish facilities for environmental preservation and agricultural research activities.

The Park Center planned for the area near Dos Playa, Boca Prins and Fountain Cave will be the focal point of the National Park and will house facilities for interpretive activities, education, visitor information, and food service. Other facilities planned to be developed in the National Park will be located at important visitor destinations such as Fountain Caves, Guadirikri Caves, the Natural Historic Center of Aruba in Pos Chikito, the trail head near Miralamar Pass, and at each of the entrances to the park.

Two areas within the National Park have been designated as "Research Areas", one near Spanish Lagoon, and a second near the Park's southeast entrance. It is planned that facilities and operations within these areas would be incorporated within the interpretive program for the National Park in the long term.